

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE GRANT RECIPIENT FOR 1996:  
REDUCING AGRICULTURAL POLLUTION THROUGH COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED  
AGRICULTURE IN URBAN, SUBURBAN, AND RURAL SITES IN MD, PA, NY, AND  
WASHINGTON, DC.**

**Grant Recipient:** Wilson College, Center for Sustainable Living (CSL)  
**Grant Title:** Reducing Agricultural Pollution through Community-Supported  
Agriculture in Urban, Suburban, and Rural Sites in MD, PA, NY City,  
and Washington, D.C.  
**Organization Contact:** Stephen Moore, Director  
Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College  
1015 Philadelphia Avenue  
Chambersburg, PA 17201  
Ph: 717-264-4141, ext. 3247  
Fax: 717-264-1578  
<http://www.csacenter.org/>  
**Project Period:** 12/16/96 - 4/30/98  
**Affected Areas:** Johnstown Metropolitan Area

**INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT RATIONALE**

Originating in Switzerland and Japan in the 1960s, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) helps link local farmers with local consumers. The idea is this: Consumers commit to pay a portion of farmers' costs for an entire growing season. In return, they receive a share of what's produced and the satisfaction of reconnecting with the land by directly participating in food production.

Community Supported Agriculture is quite attractive from both an economic, environmental, and community standpoint. In *economical* terms, CSAs relieve the producer of major marketing responsibilities and economic fluctuations. Hence, producers can concentrate on production and stewardship of the *environment*, reducing non-point pollution. From a *community* standpoint, sharing in the risks and benefits make the farmland become, in a sense, the community's farm.

The purpose of this project was to help establish organic CSAs in south central Pennsylvania, rural Maryland, and in metropolitan and suburban settings in Pittsburgh, New York City, and Washington, D.C. The result has been an increase of CSAs in the region, thus protecting the great diversity of soil types in the northeastern and mid-Atlantic regions. Furthermore, this project has helped build the capacity of individual communities to take greater responsibility for the human and environmental consequences of what happens in and around them.

While the grant period is now over, the Center for Sustainable Living is in many ways still servicing the grant by continued assistance to farmers and communities, the distribution of educational materials, and supporting a network of organizations devoted to advancing CSAs in the Region.

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Funds from the Sustainable Development Challenge Grant were used as seed money to underwrite start-up costs for the project's activities. Project activities included the following:

1. Develop 6 organic CSAs in New York City, Pittsburgh, PA, and Washington DC (operational 1997)
2. Network with local governments, non-profits, churches, universities, and the like to identify and develop 5 additional sites (operational 1997)
3. Assist 15 additional CSAs with developing plans to begin food production by summer 1998
4. Design, develop and produce educational materials. Materials produced include a CSA brochure, CSA information packet, the *CSA Handbook*, the *CSA: Making a Difference* video, the *CSA: Be a Part of the Solution* slide show, a CSA clip art collection, and a CSA web page.
5. Material and information distribution through giving presentations; hosting two conferences; submitting to local and regional publications; coordinating/ updating a national CSA database; and answering phone and mail queries.

Over the course of the grant, the *Wilson College Center for Sustainable Learning* became a significant player nationwide in the CSA movement and a major informational source on CSA. To ensure their work will continue, the Center was pro-active in copying and distributing their materials to a wide range of organizations throughout the East Coast and Beyond. In addition, the CSA work begun by this grant is continuing with the support of a two-year grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### **PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Recognized leaders in the CSA movement, these partners possess considerable track records, large constituencies, and over fifteen years of experience:

Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)  
Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank  
D.C. Food Bank  
Just Food: NYC Sustainable Food System Alliance  
Biodynamic Farming and Garden Association (BD)  
CSA North America  
Maryland Organic Food and Farming Association (MOFFA)  
Penn State Cooperative Extension Service  
The Presbytery of Donegal